

State of the River Report 2003



DETROIT RIVER (MICHIGAN)

The Detroit River is honored to be one of 14 American Heritage Rivers (AHR) in the United States designated by Presidential Executive Order. The AHR Initiative is a unique public-private partnership that sets priorities and delivers resources that foster environmental stewardship, promote economic development, and celebrate our unique history and culture.

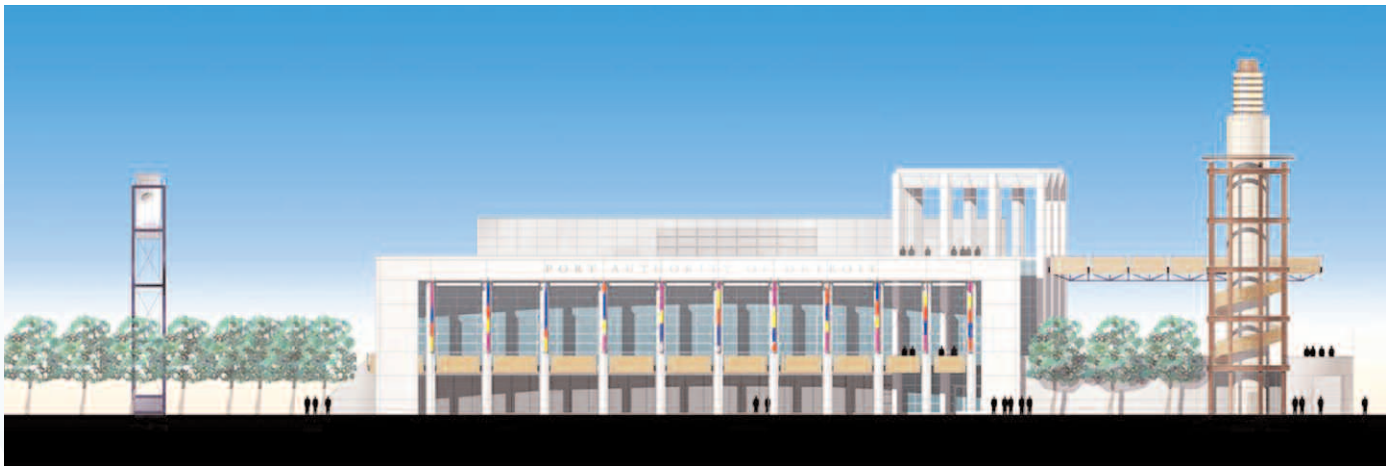
The Greater Detroit AHR Initiative of the Metropolitan Affairs Coalition is helping people rediscover one of our Nation's great rivers, reconnect to it, and redefine our relationship with it. We are no longer neglecting and abusing the Detroit River, but turning toward it — realizing that we are inextricably bound with this incredible asset that so dramatically affects our quality of life and economy.

The Detroit River has come along way. Bald eagles and sturgeon have returned to the river and record walleye are being caught. Greenway trails are being constructed along and to the river. New developments are popping up along the Detroit River. Southeast Michigan has become an international leader in sustainable manufacturing and redevelopment, and has created numerous public-private partnerships to improve and protect our natural resources. The revitalization of the Detroit River is truly remarkable: the river now hosts the only international wildlife refuge in North America. The fact that this wildlife refuge is coexisting in a major urban and industrial area further attests to our uniqueness and exceptional quality of life.

ACCOMPLISHMENT HIGHLIGHTS

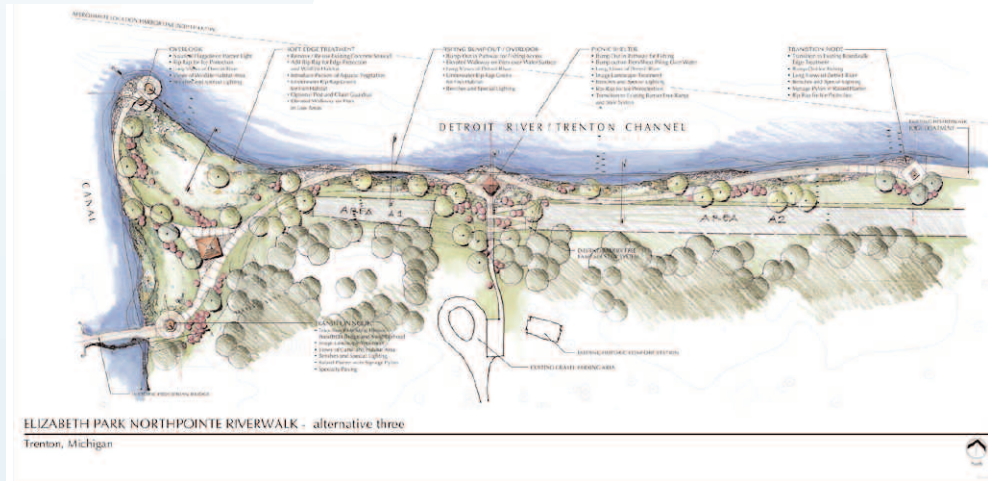
The Greater Detroit AHR Initiative has now been in existence for four years. Much has been accomplished. Some of the major highlights from the fourth year include:

- Detroit Recreation Department received \$350,000 for ecological rehabilitation of Blue Heron Lagoon on Belle Isle;
- Michigan Sea Grant and Detroit Recreation Department received \$500,000 to construct a sturgeon spawning reef off Belle Isle;
- Detroit Recreation Department received \$600,000 from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to make shoreline improvements along Belle Isle;
- Historic Fort Wayne was open on weekends and hosted a number of major festivals and re-enactment events;
- The City of Detroit and General Motors Corporation announced over \$500 million in funding to redevelop over three miles of riverfront into mixed use development between Joe Louis Arena and the Belle Isle Bridge, including construction of the three-mile Detroit RiverWalk, creation of the Tricentennial State Park & Harbor, and establishment of a Detroit Riverfront Conservancy;



The Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority received \$6 million to construct a new Public Dock and Terminal Facility on the three-mile Detroit RiverWalk near Hart Plaza in Downtown Detroit.

- The City of Detroit received \$1.3 million to stabilize the shoreline and continue the Detroit RiverWalk at the Bates Street Outfall near Hart Plaza;
- Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative and the National Park Service completed a “way-finding” manual that provided guidance for signage along our greenway trails;
- Humbug Island and Marsh, the crown-jewel of the conservation crescent in the lower Detroit River ecosystem, were acquired for conservation purposes and will become part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge;

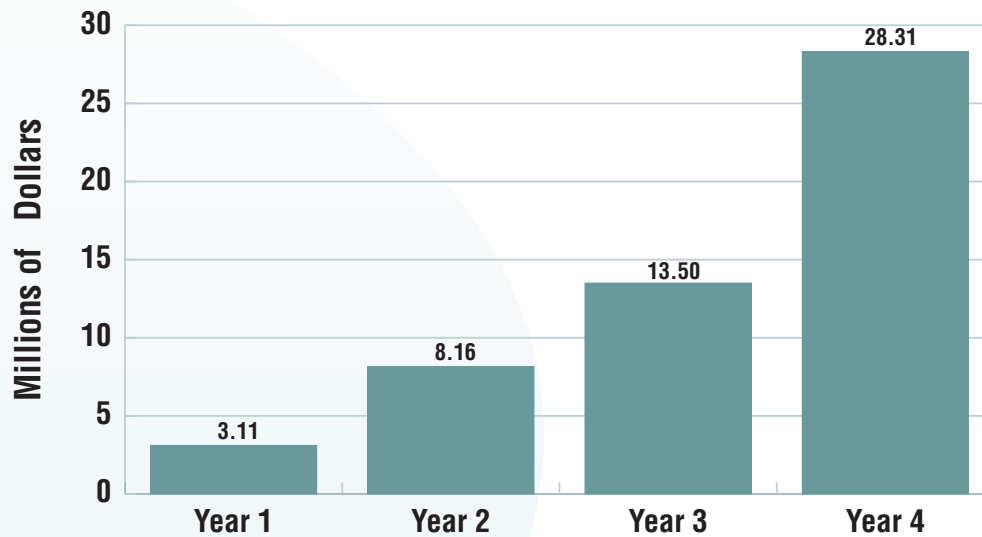


Wayne County Parks received \$1 million for the Northshore RiverWalk at Elizabeth Park in Trenton. Artist's rendering shows the proposed soft-engineered shoreline.

- DTE Energy signed a cooperative management agreement for 600 acres to be managed through the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge;
- The Greater Detroit AHR Initiative helped facilitate agreement on disposal of contaminated sediment from Black Lagoon in the Trenton Channel;
- Wayne State University and the Greater Detroit AHR Initiative convened a U.S.-Canada workshop and prepared a report titled “Evaluating ecosystem results of PCB control measures within the Detroit River-Western Lake Erie Basin;” and
- Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy and the Greater Detroit AHR Initiative implemented a soft-engineering shoreline restoration project along the river in the Grosse Ile Nature Area.

Indeed, much has been accomplished through creative partnerships. During the first four years of existence, the Greater Detroit AHR Initiative has leveraged over \$28 million, representing over a 25:1 return on investment.

CUMULATIVE RESOURCES LEVERAGED



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although much has been accomplished in the first four years of the Greater Detroit AHR Initiative, even more will be accomplished in the next four to five years. In 2004, the Greater Detroit AHR Initiative expects to help remediate contaminated sediment in the Black Lagoon and enhance shoreline habitat; continue to build greenways trails in our Lake St. Clair to Lake Erie greenway trail system; begin the recreational/educational development of the former Chrysler Paint Plant site at the lower end of the Detroit River as the gateway to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge; continue to build the International Wildlife Refuge through cooperative management agreements; and continue to build the 3.5-mile Detroit RiverWalk and realize economic redevelopment of adjacent properties.

Did you know that we have it all right in our backyard – water, wildlife, heritage, and recreation? And we are leading the Nation in public-private partnerships to preserve and protect our natural resources. ***Come Discover Our Wild Side*** and see and learn about the only International Heritage River System and the only International Wildlife Refuge in North America:

- You can fish for some of the largest walleye in North America or compete in a walleye tournament offering \$340,000 in prize money.
- You can hunt in one of the most important waterfowl migration corridors on the continent.
- You can attend the annual Pointe Mouillee Waterfowl Festival that attracts thousands of people to see the latest hunting equipment, participate in a decoy contest, and view wildlife art.
- You can attend the Hawk Fest at one of the three best spots to watch hawks in North America and the premier site east of the Mississippi River.
- You can go birding and see over 300 species of birds.
- You can go biking or running on hundreds of miles of greenway trails.
- You can row in or watch a U.S. Rowing Association regatta.
- You can participate in or watch one of over 1,000 sailboat races each year.
- You can watch a 1,000-foot long Great Lakes freighter traverse the river.

- You can canoe or kayak on scenic rivers or through our International Wildlife Refuge and our International Heritage River.
- You can visit what is commonly referred to as one of America's greatest history attractions called The Henry Ford, key battlefields of the War of 1812, Historic Fort Wayne, key locations along the Underground Railroad that helped 40,000 freedom seekers gain their freedom across the Detroit River, or local historical museums that profile some of the richest ship building history in North America.

And you don't have to drive for hours to enjoy any of this. Southeast Michigan has world-class water, wildlife, heritage, and recreational opportunities right in its backyard. And Southeast Michigan has become an international model for preserving and enhancing this quality of life. This also helps businesses achieve competitive advantage by offering quality of life opportunities to help attract and retain the next generation of employees. Southeast Michigan, including our International Heritage River System and International Wildlife Refuge, is a great place to live, work, and play!

WEBSITES

www.tellusnews.com/ahr
www.epa.gov/rivers/98rivers/detroit.html

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